



Greater Maple Valley-Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

Serving the Community Since 1965

September 21, 2011

The Honorable Dow Constantine
King County Executive
Chair, King County Growth Management Planning Council
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Executive Constantine:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Greater Maple Valley-Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce, I am requesting that Growth Management Planning Council "grandfather" 15 undeveloped school sites in the rural area for future school construction. The Tahoma School District, which serves the greater Maple Valley area, owns one of those sites directly adjacent to the existing Tahoma Junior High School. With careful and thoughtful planning, the district purchased that site to maximize the cost efficiencies of transportation and administration associated with the co-location of two schools.

School districts must by law serve every child residing in their district. As community members and business owners, we expect that our school district will operate its programs in a manner that is not only equitable to all of our students, regardless of their address, but also in a way that makes best use of limited public funding.

The Chamber Board of Directors believes existing sites, which were purchased under current zoning regulations, should be preserved for their intended use as school sites. We are dismayed that our students' education may be compromised by King County's adoption of policies that do not consider long-term education planning and programming, limited school district resources, and taxpayer interests. We support the existing King County Countywide Planning Policies authorizing schools to be built in the rural area and to be connected to a tightline sewer because these policies work. They provide school districts with the tools to plan effectively for our students' needs and they do not lead to growth. Schools are not built prior to growth; schools are a response to growth.

Before the GMPC takes action on the policies affecting schools, we urge you to analyze the impacts of the proposed policies on public education and the taxpayers' interests. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kevin Patterson
President

Growing Business, Building Community

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